

- Appl. No. 09/522,296
In re Kusumoto et al.
Reply to Office Action of Nov. 01, 2004

Remarks

The above amendments and remarks to follow are intended to be fully responsive to the Final Action mailed November 01, 2004.

Claims 1 and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's admission of the prior art (Fig. 28 from Japanese Patent Publication No. 10-295857). Claims 1 and 30 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Take. Claims 2, 4 and 5 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the admitted prior art or Take in view of Motomiya. Claims 13, 20 and 21 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the admitted prior art or Take in view of Minabe. Claim 16 was rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the admitted prior art or Take in view of Endo. Claim 19 was rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the admitted prior art in view of Mills. Claims 6-12, 14, 15, 18 and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the admitted prior art or Take in view of Mockridge. Claim 28 was rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Drajan.

Applicant respectfully disagrees with each of these prior art rejections. In an effort to expedite prosecution, Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 28 and 30 to clarify the structural distinction argued throughout this case. Since these amendments address issues that have been at the heart of this prosecution, no new issues are being presented by this amendment.

With respect to claims 1 and 30, neither JP 10-295857 (admitted prior art) nor Take discloses a hollow portion formed between the shaft securing portion and the face portion. These references merely disclose a hollow portion formed between the shaft securing portion and the heel wall.

With respect to claim 28, Drajan fails to disclose a shaft securing portion, homogeneously formed by casting with a top portion and a sole portion of the hollow outer shell, where a hollow portion is provided between the shaft securing portion and a face portion of the outer shell.

In view of the foregoing amendments and arguments, it is respectfully submitted that the presently claimed invention is patentable over the prior art. Should the Examiner believe further discussion regarding the above claim language would expedite prosecution they are invited to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



Matthew Stavish
Reg. No. 36,286

Liniak, Berenato & White
6550 Rock Spring Drive
Suite 240
Bethesda, Maryland 20817
Tel. (301) 896-0600
Fax. (301) 896-0607